

Message Text

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73

ORIGIN OES-06

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 EUR-12 FEA-01 ACDA-07 CIAE-00

INR-07 IO-13 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-07 NRC-05 DODE-00

PM-04 SS-15 SP-02 PRS-01 TRSE-00 ERDA-05 COME-00

NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /102 R

DRAFTED BY OES/NET/RD:HDBENGELSDORF:LL:RJP

APPROVED BY OES/NET/RD:HDBENGELSDORF

OES/NET/RD:MKRATZER

AF/S:DCHRISTENSEN

AF/:JJBLAKE

ACDA:CVANDOREN (SUBS)

----- 087755

O 240042Z APR 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 099278

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ACOM, PFOR, PARM, TECH

SUBJECT: PROPOSED US-DUTCH-SWISS NUCLEAR SALE TO SOUTH
AFRICA

REFS: (A) TELCONS BETWEEN DAVID CHRISTENSEN AND AMBASSA-
DOR BOWDLER; (B) STATE 98043; (C) CAPE TOWN 00464

1. ALTHOUGH WE UNDERSTAND THAT ESCOM MAY PRESS FOR A
WRITTEN STATEMENT DEPARTMENT WOULD PREFER TO KEEP THE
ASSURANCES TO ESCOM ORAL AT LEAST FOR THE PRESENT TIME.

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ACCORDINGLY, EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO PRESENT TO ESCOM AND

SAG POINTS SET OUT IN PARAS 4 ORALLY, WHITE NOT - REPEAT NOT - USING PARA 4A. YOU SHOULD REITERATE OUR VERY STRONG DESIRE THAT NO PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS REGARDING AWARD BE MADE AT THIS TIME. IF YOU ARE PRESSED TO PRE SENT POINTS IN WRITING, YOU ARE AUTHORIZED TO EXPRESS THE VIEW THAT YOU DO NOT ANTICIPATE A PROBLEM IN DOING SO, ALTHOUGH SOME TIME WILL BE REQUIRED TO OBTAIN THE NECESSARY AUTHORIZATIONS.

FYI: WE HAVE IN MIND AUTHORIZING YOU TO PASS OVER AN INFORMAL LETTER COVERING THESE SAME POINTS, AFTER MAY 6. END FYI.

2. WE HAVE JUST BEEN ADVISED BY GE THAT THE CONSORTIUM RECEIVED A LETTER OF INTENT FROM ESCOM WHICH PROVIDES THAT GE MUST RECEIVE ITS LICENSE FROM NRC BY MAY 21. IN OUR JUDGMENT THIS IS AN UNREALISTIC SCHEDULE. WHILE WE APPRECIATE ESCOM'S DESIRE TO GET EVERYTHING NAILED DOWN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, WE ARE CONCERNED THAT THE DEGREE OF PRESSURE THEY ARE APPLYING COULD PROVE TO BE SERIOUSLY COUNTER PRODUCTIVE TO OUR EFFORTS TO PROCEED IN A WAY THAT WILL MINIMIZE ADVERSE REACTIONS. AS THE EMBASSY APPRECIATES, THE NRC IS AN INDEPENDENT REGULATORY AGENCY, AND WHEN REVIEWING MAJOR APPLICATIONS OF THIS CHARACTER, IT MUST COMPORT ITSELF IN A MANNER THAT WILL ASSURE ALL INTERESTED PARTIES, INCLUDING THE CONGRESS, THAT IT IS CARRYING OUT ITS RESPONSIBILITIES IN A JUDICIOUS, EVEN-HANDED FASHION. WE ALSO SERIOUSLY QUESTION WHETHER IT IS IN THE INTEREST OF THE SAG AND THE USG TO APPEAR TO BE RUSHING THROUGH A MATTER OF THIS PROBABLE DEGREE OF INTEREST WHEN OTHER MAJOR NUCLEAR EXPORT TRANSACTIONS OF THIS CHARACTER, INCLUDING THOSE WITH NPT PARTIES, SOMETIMES REQUIRE SUBSTANTIALLY MORE TIME. ACCORDINGLY, WHILE EMBASSY IS NOT REQUESTED TO EXPLICITLY RAISE THIS QUESTION OF TIMING WITH SOUTH AFRICANS AT THIS TIME, YOU MAY WISH TO DRAW FROM THESE POINTS IF THE SUBJECT OF TIMING ARISES.

3. WE UNDERSTAND GE INTENDS TO AVOID GIVING THIS MATTER ANY PUBLICITY. HOWEVER, ONCE EXPORT LICENSE APPLICATION IS FILED, NRC IS OBLIGATED TO PLACE APPLICATION IN PUBLIC CONFIDENTIAL

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DOCUMENT ROOM PROMPTLY AND TO PUBLISH IN FEDERAL REGISTER. GE HAS ALREADY SENT ADVANCE COPY OF APPLICATION TO NRC, AND HAD PLANNED TO MAKE FORMAL SUBMISSION ON MONDAY. WE HAVE TAKEN STEPS TO ENSURE THAT NRC DOES NOT REGARD ADVANCE COPY AS FORMAL SUBMISSION, AND HAVE OBTAINED GE AGREEMENT NOT TO SUBMIT APPLICATION ON MONDAY PENDING FURTHER DISCUSSION WITH DEPARTMENT. SISCO

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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